

Continued from A1

Foremost that means the surrounding and supporting communities of Midway, Charleston and Heber City. The most intimately impacted will be Midway, a community of approximately 2,000, and Charleston, a village of about 400. They are by far the smallest towns involved in the Utah games.

For the most part, the tiny titans are taking on the challenge with a hearty can-do spirit.

"I think we've had good rapport and been working pretty well together," says John Whiting, Charleston mayor, whose township has Soldier Hollow on its nearest doorstep.

"The only way we're going to make this work is with a joint effort by all of us," says Eugene Owens, Midway mayor, also small-bore rifle shot from Soldier. "So far I think we've had a cooperative attitude on the part of most everyone."

And Robert Mathis, Wasatch County planner, who lives in Midway, says, "We've held meetings in Midway, Heber City and Salt Lake and I'd say we've had a pretty remarkable consensus about the benefits and concerns."

Healthy concerns

It wouldn't be possible to undertake a project this size and not have some healthy differences of opinion. And, despite general good cheer, all parties are wrestling with a mixed bag of optimism and reservations.

"To be perfectly honest, it's kind of like, 'Well, we've got the venue, that's for sure.' Whether we want it now that we've got it is another matter," says Owens.

"Maybe it'll be a good experience. It'll take four years to find out."

"I think we're all excited, but with some hesitations," says

make the best of it we can."

Owens, who's lived the last 20 of his 74 years in Midway, says, "I just want us to keep things looking halfway decent around here. I believe we can if we plan it right."

He said Midway's famous Swiss Days, which draws about 20,000 tourists daily, should have provided some sort of shakedown cruise for the Olympics.

"But this is like two Swiss Days each day for 16 days," says Owens. "It's a lot more, but I think we can handle it."

Lasting benefits

Sixteen days is a key thing to remember for many in the valley. Whatever problems or inconveniences are posed, they will be brief over the sweep of time. In their wake will be lasting benefits.

"We will have improvements in the infrastructure which are badly needed," says Lucille Tuttle, chairwoman of the Utah State Parks and Recreation Board and a resident of Heber City. "Everyone talks about I-15 as though the Olympics are the only reason for the work there. Not really. Upgrades have been needed there for years and years. The same with some of the things around here."

Solider Hollow figures to be a beehive of activity before and after the Games.

Plans call for the facility to be used as a training site for future Olympians. Currently Lake Placid, N.Y., offers the only such place in the United States. Soldier Hollow would be on the World Cup circuit after the Games. And World Cup and NCAA competitions are among the 10 or 11 events the SLOC wants the venue to hold as training for the 2002 Games.

The facility also will be used as a training site for local youth wanting to get involved in cross-country or biathlon competition. It will be available for recreation

than politically dead? ts facing tough times

The proposals have caused cracks in the communists' vaunted party discipline. Some members are questioning whether the leadership is selling out. And some observers predict the cracks could lead the party to split in two.

"I think there is a real danger of such a split," said Nikolai Petrov, a political analyst with the Carnegie Endowment for Peace.

Nostalgia

In the West, the Soviet collapse was widely seen as the death of communism and proof that Soviet-style state socialism didn't work. In Russia, the party was banned for a year after its hard-liners attempted a coup against Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in 1991.

Perhaps the real surprise is that the Communist Party is as much of a force in Russia as it is today. It remains the biggest party in the Duma and still draws strong allegiance in many parts of the country, particularly in the southern "Red Belt" and among the elderly,

who have fared worst under the new market economy.

Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov gave Yeltsin a scare in the 1996 presidential election and is thought to be positioning himself now for a run in the next election, in 2000.

But what is a communist these days? There is a hard core — both within the party and in radical splinter groups — that is openly nostalgic for the Soviet Union, totalitarian warts and all, and still regards the United States as an archenemy.

Zyuganov treads a more moderate course, although he is notoriously difficult to pin down. His brand of communism is based more on Russian nationalism than Marxism, and he yearns for Russia to somehow reclaim its status as a great world power.

Zyuganov insists he supports some market reforms and has support from some of Russia's new capitalists. But asked recently if he could better be described as a social democrat, he demurred. "No, I'm a communist," he insisted.

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decided to ban the nuclear transfer technique.

The ban won't deter Pharming, which said it will continue its research through joint ventures with companies in the United States and

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Topping the list of concerns is people-moving and traffic flow.

This will be the busiest venue of the Salt Lake Games, used all 16 days. Approximately 700-800 athletes will participate here and 21 medals will be awarded. Although biathlon and cross-country and nordic combined are phantom sports in the U.S., they are centerpieces throughout much of Europe, generating advertising and interest second only to soccer in many countries.

Therefore, Soldier Hollow must expect to stand guard to a small army of spectators, upwards of 40,000 a day...20,000 each at the two events scheduled every day at this venue.

Although plans are not finalized, the current approach calls for traffic from Salt Lake City to come up I-80 and down U.S. 40, bypassing River Road and funneling into Heber City. There, they may be parked in fields at the Wasatch County Fairgrounds, near the Heber City Airport or possibly open space rented from farmers — then bused the remaining three or four miles to the venue.

Another prime concern is providing water for the venue. It is to be supplied by the Charleston Water Conservancy District, which currently struggles with capacity and quality.

A 50,000-gallon tank is to be upgraded to either 500,000 or 750,000 to service Soldier Hollow, Whiting says.

The Charleston conservancy district also will get \$300,000 from the Olympic organizers to improve the water system. But that still will leave a sizable bill. "Yes," says Whiting. "We can count on rate increases."

There goes the peace

Not the least of the worries for many throughout the peaceful valley is just that — there goes the peace they came to crave in the first place.

But Whiting, who has lived all his 42 years in the valley, says, "I know it's going to be a challenge. But I still think this is for the best. We're going to have growth

at skiers. And it is hoped that an asphalt oval will be constructed, both for the skiers' summertime roller-blade training and for blading by local youth.

This is among the things which excite Mathis.

"We'll have a world-class, muscle-powered winter facility permanently in the valley," he says. "Instead of alpine skiing, which costs an arm and a leg, this is a more democratic sport, more financially available.

"And our children will have a chance to be trained by world-class coaches at a world-class training center."

A good job

Dave Jacobson, Wasatch County planner, who was part of a local delegation which attended the Nagano games, agrees that doing a great job is important.

He's lived in Midway all his 53 years and he sees a lasting Olympic legacy.

"One of the things we learned in Nagano is the need for spectators to have something to do before and after the events," he said.

"People loved to see the stage-coach and horses in the closing ceremonies. This is a chance to showcase our heritage and give visitors something to take home with them."

Perhaps more importantly is the chance to showcase others' heritages.

There will be 1,000 to 1,500 volunteer jobs needed here, many available to locals. It's a great chance to rub elbows with the world and open eyes.

"The thing that got me the most was watching little Japanese kids walking to the events, excitedly talking, their faces all lit up," says Jacobson. "This is going to be a great experience for all of us and tons and tons of fun and education for our children.

"That is well worth our best efforts. And that is what we'll give."

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